[The effect of the Cook Islands' Act on the patterns of Pukapukan life will be found in the appropriate categories and in category 177.]

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the chief's executive (*tevia*), who had the power to say whether a law should or should not apply to the island (p. 387). Decisions were reported (*kave te tananga*) to the several villages in a meeting assembled by a special messenger, called simply *te leo o te aliki* or *te leo o te tupele* (the voice of the chiefs or of the old men). The high chief did not attend the meetings of the old men but sent his representative (*te talatala no te aliki*), who was commissioned to report the chief's opinions to the old men. It is probable that special meetings of all the people of the island were held on occasion to discuss such a matter as the redivision of reserve land, or the realignment of reserve boundaries. A meeting of this type seems to have been in progress at the outbreak of the civil war (p. 389).

The control of village affairs was largely in the hands of the village men. The chief of each village acted as priest in village functions. In theory he devoted his time to the welfare of his people and the control of village works initiated by a decision of the people. The sub-chiefs (*langatila*) were the executive officers, directing village works. Neither chief nor sub-chief received tribute from village or lineage members. Each was fed by his own family group. In island affairs, the chiefs and sub-chiefs were advisory and executive officers, but the real balance of power, in theory at any rate, seems to have been with the old men, who ordered and directed inter-village and island affairs. When the high chief or his executive, who perhaps corresponded to the modern king's prime minister, was an outstanding personality, he might assume for himself many of the powers that ordinarily lay with the old men; these powers would revert to the old men on the chief's death. The governing of the island, therefore, really lay with the group of old men who because of their age and presumed experience were considered better able to order affairs than a chief or his executive.

Sanctions

Sanctions invoked to deal with most antisocial conduct were not secular, but depended on punishment, usually sickness, sent to the wrongdoer by the gods. Lying was condemned but not punished secularly. Adultery was punished both by the gods and by the wronged person (p. 329).

Thieving from the reserves was punished by the gods. In the reign of the chief Tuiayanga, however, when there was a great food shortage, punishment for stealing was reenforced by group action; the law of *pule pae* (death law) was put into operation and implemented by the guards of the reserves (p. 387). Willful homicide seems also to have been punished by group action, perhaps if it was thought that the gods would be too long in acting. The appropriate punishment was whipping to death. The maternal sub-lineage of the victim was either made the instrument of this punishment or assumed collective responsibility for the crime, though should the homicide shock the community by its barbarity, all the populace might join in the beating (1).

If one individual should steal from another, the victim was allowed to be his own detective and judge and would proceed to reenforce the punishment of the gods. The injured person or a friend made inquiries and threatened to kill the thief should he be discovered. The thief might pose as a friend and go to look for the missing articles, simulating intense search, but always return with empty hands. The owner of the stolen property might

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627 671 378 The owner of the stolen property might go to the house of the man whom he suspected and, in turn, take articles to the value of those missing, thus provoking a quarrel. Disputes arising from such actions or from unjust accusations were settled by wrestling, where a fall in the ring decided the matter, or else by a stand-up fight with sticks; to administer a good beating was considered adequate compensation for the loss of goods or for the loss of a wife. If the thief was discovered, the stolen goods were returned in full by him or his family, or else goods of the same value were paid, or a gift might be made to the injured party, large enough to be considered adequate reparation.

626 763 If the thief was not discovered, his children, own or classificatory, born before or after the theft, would certainly die early deaths. The remarks of neighbors might then lead the thief to confess his earlier fault. In the confessional held round a death bed, thieving is one of the matters which relatives close to the dying person are particularly requested to confess.

674 Thieving was rare in Pukapuka, owing to ease of detection, but the stories of Nuanua and Kieilu show the type of behavior it evoked when it occurred:

627 Nuanua was fishing on the back beach where he picked up a piece of driftwood bamboo to which he found several huge pearl shells attached. He took the bamboo to the lagoon and securely anchored it there to allow the shells to grow bigger. One night all the shells were stolen from the bamboo. Nuanua inquired everywhere, but with no results. He searched month after month, and many times interrogated Tipui, a man whom he suspected of the theft. All was fruitless, and Nuanua died without having found his shells. After this, the children of Tipui, and even of some of his relatives, began to die sudden, mysterious deaths. One day, Tipui himself became very sick. Everyone thought he would confess his theft. But he still feared surviving relatives of Nuanua. On his death bed, however, when he knew he could not recover from his illness, Tipui confessed his sin. It was too late to save his family which died out very soon thereafter.

Kieilu was a noted warrior (*toa*) in the time of the chief Maina. One day he went bonito fishing. On his return, he put his line and six pearl-shell hooks in fresh water to wash out the salt. He put them in a little pool (*loto*) which then existed behind the present London Missionary Society church. Then he went to the back beach. Coming home again, he found that his rod and hooks had all disappeared. He hunted everywhere for them without result. Being a great warrior, he pulled down many of the houses close by, such was the frenzy of his search. He threatened to kill the people in these houses if they did not tell who had stolen the precious hooks. Every search proved fruitless, and to this day, these hooks have not been found. But the people who lived about this pool were called *mauaru ula* (red hallies). If one wishes to insult a person living in this place even today, one calls him *mauaru ula*, a terrible reminder of an earlier shame.

[578] The story of Wuina, combining motifs of theft and murder, illustrates permissible individual retribution (1).

578 Slander (*make wuna*, "throwing words") was apparently a common cause of dispute in former days, as, indeed, it is today. If one man slandered another, the injured party challenged the slanderer to a wrestling contest and tried to throw him. If he succeeded, he explained to the people that he tried for an extra bad fall because of the slander. If the injured party was

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a weakling, he asked a powerful friend to wrestle for him. If one woman slandered another, the injured party followed the other to the bush where she tried to beat her with a stick, or else fought her with her hands, trying to tear out her hair or otherwise pain her. Sometimes the injured woman tried to seduce the husband of the slanderer. If she succeeded, she publicly humiliated the slanderer by announcing that she had seduced the man, telling also the reason why.

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Today, the Cook Islands Act has superseded old-time law. The talo beds and the reserves, however, are still administered by the guard, which levies fines on those caught stealing. One day during our stay, the women's guard from Loto came en masse to Yato and accused a Yato woman of stealing talo from Uta. The Yato woman confessed, and was immediately fined six *uto* nuts or three pennies. She handed over the nuts, and all were satisfied. In their report to the village each night, the guards mention the names of persons who have trespassed on reserve lands.

THE HOUSEHOLD

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The native definition of a household is that group of people which use the same cook house. Three households (households 8, 44, 49) described by informants constitute variations on this pattern. (See table 5 and p. 249.)

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The number of sleep houses all grouped together on the same lot and occupied by the same household unit depends on the size of the household. Where there are several sleep houses the parent or parents and unmarried children, blood or adopted, sleep in one house; a further grouping occurs in terms of relationship, age grades, and personal choice. A married son or daughter generally sleeps with his family in a separate house.

Composition

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The relationships of the persons making up individual households studied is shown in table 5. The 54 households of Ngake and Yato give 38 distinct groupings of kin:

Ten households are composed of mother, father, and children. Seven households are composed of mother, father, and adopted children. Two households are composed of mother and children, mother in household 16 being a widow, and in household 42, a divorcée.

The biological family of mother, father, and children is the basis of the composition of 27 of the 54 households. In 13 households, mother, father, and adopted children is the basic unit. In only six households does the combination of father, mother, children, and adopted children occur.

Outside these groups, the most common household member is the son's wife. One son's wife and one daughter's husband (household 8) have, with their children, remained in residence with their father-in-law though their mates are deceased. It is further noteworthy that these two, the (deceased) son's wife and the (deceased) daughter's husband, are brother and sister. No explanation of their residence was given by infor-